

## **This I Believe**

Have you ever heard of the saying “The pen is mightier than the sword”?

The saying teaches us that words can help us achieve things violence would never be able to in life. For people with little or no physical ability – one example of these people would be me - they would have to rely on words and remarks to defend themselves, to push forward and to get what they want in life. Unless of course, they happen to have the misfortune to end up in the boxing ring, where attempting to tranquilise a hot-blooded Muhammad Ali with impressive vocabulary would result in a messy death.

Words have the power to calm. In primary school, I had to keep a weekly journal, documenting our thoughts, interesting events, or anything we wanted to confide in the teacher. Through the various ups and downs of 10 year old life, writing in the journal was not only a creative outlet, but also a place to organise thoughts and vent. There was once an incident that left me feeling betrayed and furious. After scribbling away at lightning speed for five full pages, a sense of Zen washed over me, and soothed my senses. You could say that every letter, every harshly phrased sentence gradually but persistently chipped away at the rock-like emotions and dissolved it into the white pulp of lined paper. That’s what words can do.

The power of words is not limited to writing. There is a box sitting in one of the cupboards in my room. It goes by the name ‘Happy Box’ though I never say that aloud. Whenever hopelessness or gloominess sinks into the perimeter of my mind, surrounding and trapping any other thoughts of remote joy, I instinctively think “Now where is that Happy Box?” It safe keeps letters from old friends, teachers and parents. The oldest one dates back to twelve years ago – when I was barely literate - the newest, just last month. The uplifting words of kind friends and encouraging penmanship of teachers guide me through complicated periods of stress or disappointment. When I sift through the contents, the letters I read block off all outside noise and keeps me sane. It’s like being deep underwater; the only difference is that I’m submerged in words. That’s what words can do.

Words and language differentiate us from other animals. They represent diverse cultures and human intelligence. They are communication tools, but beyond that, they can also be motivators and medicine for lost souls. A person who has managed to fully tap on the beauty and power of words has the potential to rule the world one day. He or she will be able to move crowds, and to get people to listen.

I hope to harness the full beauty of words one day. I believe in the power of words.